

## **RESOLUTION NO. RS2018-1529**

### **A resolution honoring the life and legacy of San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk upon the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his assassination.**

WHEREAS, November 27, 2018 marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination of Harvey Bernard Milk who had been elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors just eleven (11) months prior to his tragic death; and

WHEREAS, Harvey Milk was the first openly gay elected official in the history of California and, at the time of his death, the most recognized political advocate for LGBTQ rights in the United States. Shortly after his election to office in 1977, Milk successfully passed stringent LGBTQ rights legislation in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, Milk approached public service in the same way he approached life: authentically and selflessly. His election as one of the first openly LGBTQ people elected to office in the United States marked an important moment for LGBTQ political representation, inspiring countless LGBTQ people to follow in his footsteps; and

WHEREAS, Milk was killed by a fellow former city supervisor who was sentenced to a mere five (5) years imprisonment for manslaughter. Milk thereafter emerged as an icon in the LGBTQ community and has since been described as the most famous and most significantly open LGBTQ official to be elected in the United States. In 2009, he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of Milk's death, cities and municipalities across the United States have persevered in their pursuit of LGBTQ rights and nondiscrimination legislation. In Nashville, the Metropolitan Council enacted Ordinance No. BL2009-502 in 2009, making it unlawful for the local government to fail or refuse to hire or promote, or to discharge any individual, because of the individual's gender identity or sexual orientation; thereby becoming the first government in Tennessee to protect LGBTQ city employees from discrimination; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Metropolitan Council enacted broader legislation, under Ordinance No. BL2011-838, requiring private enterprises doing business with the city to refrain from discrimination against the LGBTQ community; and

WHEREAS, these efforts by the Metropolitan Council, and similar efforts across the country, have not been without adversity or setbacks. In 2011, the Tennessee General Assembly enacted legislation, signed by Governor Bill Haslam, that effectively banned local governments the adoption of LGBTQ non-discrimination legislation beyond local government internal policies -- thereby nullifying Ordinance No. BL2011-838. Today, as a result, localities throughout Tennessee cannot adopt ordinances prohibiting private employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, despite such setbacks, citizens and leaders of Nashville and Davidson County have persisted in their recognition of the rights afforded to all citizens and have opposed discrimination on the basis of inexorable characteristics such as sexual orientation and gender identity. Today, as a matter of policy, the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, as well as Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS), maintain and enforce non-discrimination policies that extend protections to gender identity and sexual orientation; employment benefits are extended to same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners; and currently, according to the Victory Institute's comprehensive online map out For AMERICA.org (<https://outforamerica.org/state/tennessee/>), there are five out elected officials in the State of a Tennessee, four representing Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, in honor of the spirit and legacy of Harvey Milk, there is no nobler response than to continue these and other efforts in pursuit of the equality Milk envisioned more than 40 years ago. In that effort, the people of Nashville and Davidson County continue to stand in unison with the LGBTQ community; and

WHEREAS, because representation reflects power, the United States and local communities throughout this nation remain at their best when decision-making bodies – including city councils, state legislatures, judiciaries and Congress – represent the full spectrum of America’s diversity -- a goal Harvey Milk strived toward every day of his life.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as honoring the life and legacy of Harvey Bernard Milk on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his untimely death. In so doing, the Council calls upon citizens of Nashville and Davidson County to continue standing in solidarity with the LGBTQ community throughout the United States and becoming a champion for full LGBTQ equality.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council further goes on record as acknowledging, forty years after his death, that Harvey Milk’s tireless efforts to improve people’s lives through public service not only establishes his place in history as a trailblazer, but sets the standard to which public servants should aspire.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon is adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

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